

# IS MY CHILD SICK – COMMON ILLNESSES

ILLNESS	DEFINITION	POSSIBLE CAUSE/S	RETURN TO SCHOOL
<b>COUGH</b>	<p>A cough is the sound made when the cough reflex suddenly forces air and secretions from the lungs</p> <p>A coughing spasm is over 5 minutes of continuous coughing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most are part of a cold, a viral infection of the large airway (viral bronchitis)</li> <li>• Other common causes: croup, bronchiolitis, asthma, allergic cough, whooping cough</li> </ul> <p><b>Sputum or Phlegm</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yellow or green phlegm is a normal part of the healing process of viral bronchitis.</li> <li>• This means the lining of the trachea was damaged by the viral infection and is being coughed up as new mucosa replaces it.</li> <li>• Bacteria do not cause bronchitis in healthy children. Antibiotics are not indicated for the yellow or green phlegm seen with colds.</li> <li>• The main treatment of a productive cough is to facilitate it with good fluid intake, a humidifier (if the air is dry) and warm chicken broth or apple juice for coughing spasms (if over age 1).</li> </ul>	<p>Your child can return to day care or school after the fever is gone and your child feels well enough to participate in normal activities. For practical purposes, the spread of coughs and colds cannot be prevented.</p>
<b>RASH – localized, cause unknown</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rash on one part of the body (localized or clustered)</li> <li>• Red or pink rash</li> <li>• Small spots, large spots or solid red</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Main cause:</b> skin contact with some irritant.</li> <li>• Other common causes: 8 rashes that you may be able to recognize are listed below. If you suspect one of them, go there. If not, use this guideline</li> </ul>	<p>Children with localized rashes do not need to miss any day care or school.</p>
<b>RASH – widespread, cause unknown</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rash over most of the body (widespread or generalized)</li> <li>• Occasionally just on hands, feet and buttocks - but both sides of body</li> <li>• Red or pink rash</li> <li>• Small spots, large spots or solid red skin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Main cause:</b> a 2 or 3 day rash occurring with a viral illness. Viral rashes usually have symmetrical pink spots on the trunk.</li> <li>• Other common causes: 5 rashes that you may be able to recognize are listed below. If you suspect one of them, go to that topic. If not, use this topic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most viral rashes are no longer contagious once the fever is gone.</li> <li>• For minor rashes, your child can return to day care or school after the <b>FEVER</b> is gone.</li> <li>• For major rashes, your child can return to day care or school after the <b>RASH</b> is gone or your doctor says it's safe to return with the rash.</li> </ul>
<b>VOMITING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vomiting is the forceful emptying (throwing up) of a large portion of the stomach's contents through the mouth</li> <li>• Nausea and abdominal discomfort usually precede each bout of vomiting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Main cause:</b> stomach infection (gastritis) from a stomach virus (e.g., Rotavirus). The illness starts with vomiting but diarrhea usually follows within 12-24 hours.</li> <li>• If vomiting persists as an isolated symptom (without diarrhea) for more than 24 hours, more serious causes must be considered.</li> </ul>	<p>Your child can return to day care or school after vomiting and fever are gone.</p>
		<p><b>Severity of Vomiting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The following is an arbitrary attempt to classify vomiting by risk for dehydration:</li> <li>• <b>MILD:</b> 1 - 4 times/day</li> <li>• <b>MODERATE:</b> 5 - 10 times/day</li> <li>• <b>SEVERE:</b> Vomits everything or nearly everything</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Severity relates even more to the length of time that the particular severity level has persisted. At the beginning of a vomiting illness (especially following food poisoning), it's common for a child to vomit everything for 3 or 4 hours and then become stable with mild or moderate vomiting.</li> </ul>	